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# Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*on the report of the Second Committee (A/57/532/Add.6)*]

## 57/261. Promoting an integrated management approach to the Caribbean Sea area in the context of sustainable development

*The General Assembly*,

*Reaffirming* the principles and commitments enshrined in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development[1] and the principles embodied in the Declaration of Barbados[2] and the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States,[3] as well as other relevant declarations and international instruments,

*Recalling* the Declaration and review document adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-second special session,[4]

*Taking into account* all other relevant General Assembly resolutions, including resolutions 54/225 of 22 December 1999 and 55/203 of 20 December 2000,

*Taking into account also* the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development[5] and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development ("Johannesburg Plan of Implementation"),[6]

*Noting with interest* the respective partnership initiatives voluntarily undertaken by Governments, international organizations and major groups and announced at the Summit,

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[1] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3–14 June 1992* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), vol. I: *Resolutions adopted by the Conference*, resolution 1, annex I.

[2] *Report of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Bridgetown, Barbados, 25 April–6 May 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.94.I.18 and corrigenda), chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

[3] Ibid., annex II.

[4] See resolution S-22/2, annex.

[5] *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August–4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[6] Ibid., resolution 2, annex.

*Reaffirming* the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea,[7] which provides the overall legal framework for ocean activities, and emphasizing its fundamental character,

*Conscious* that the problems of ocean space are closely interrelated and need to be considered as a whole through an integrated, interdisciplinary and intersectoral approach,

*Emphasizing* the importance of national, regional and global action and cooperation in the marine sector as recognized by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in chapter 17 of Agenda 21,[8]

*Recalling* the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region, signed at Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, on 24 March 1983,[9] which contains the definition of the wider Caribbean region of which the Caribbean Sea is part,

*Welcoming* the adoption, on 6 October 1999 in Aruba, of the Protocol Concerning Pollution from Land-based Sources and Activities[10] to the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region,

*Welcoming also* the entry into force, on 18 June 2000, of the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife[10] to the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region,

*Recalling* the relevant work done by the International Maritime Organization,

*Considering* that the Caribbean Sea area includes a large number of States, countries and territories, most of which are developing countries and small island developing States that are ecologically fragile, structurally weak and economically vulnerable and are also affected, inter alia, by their limited capacity, narrow resource base, need for financial resources, high levels of poverty and the resulting social problems and the challenges and opportunities of globalization and trade liberalization,

*Recognizing* that the Caribbean Sea has a unique biodiversity and highly fragile ecosystem,

*Emphasizing* that the Caribbean countries have a high degree of vulnerability occasioned by climate change and climate variability, associated phenomena, such as the rise in sea level, the El Niño phenomenon and the increase in the frequency and intensity of natural disasters caused by hurricanes, floods and droughts, and that they are also subject to natural disasters, such as those caused by volcanoes, tsunamis and earthquakes,

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[7] See *The Law of the Sea: Official Texts of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 and of the Agreement relating to the Implementation of Part XI of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 with Index and Excerpts from the Final Act of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.97.V.10).

[8] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3–14 June 1992* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), vol. I: *Resolutions adopted by the Conference*, resolution 1, annex II.

[9] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1506, No. 25974.

[10] Available on the Internet at www.cep.unep.org/law/sub_law/htm.

*Underlining* the importance of the ongoing work of the working group on climate change and natural disasters established by the Inter-Agency Task Force for Disaster Reduction,

*Bearing in mind* the heavy reliance of most of the Caribbean economies on their coastal areas, as well as on the marine environment in general, to achieve their sustainable development needs and goals,

*Recognizing* the Caribbean Environment Outlook process currently being undertaken by the United Nations Environment Programme, and welcoming the support being provided by the Caribbean Environment Programme of the United Nations Environment Programme towards its implementation,

*Acknowledging* that the intensive use of the Caribbean Sea for maritime transport, as well as the considerable number and interlocking character of the maritime areas under national jurisdiction where Caribbean countries exercise their rights and duties under international law, present a challenge for the effective management of the resources,

*Noting* the problem of marine pollution caused, inter alia, by land-based sources and the continuing threat of pollution from ship-generated waste and sewage as well as from the accidental release of hazardous and noxious substances in the Caribbean Sea area,

*Taking note* of resolutions GC(44)/RES/17 of 22 September 2000[11] and GC(46)RES/9 of 20 September 2002[12] of the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency on safety of transport of radioactive materials,

*Mindful* of the diversity and dynamic interaction and competition among socio-economic activities for the use of the coastal areas and the marine environment and their resources,

*Mindful also* of the efforts of the Caribbean countries to address in a more holistic manner the sectoral issues relating to the management of the Caribbean Sea area and, in so doing, to promote an integrated management approach to the Caribbean Sea area in the context of sustainable development, through a regional cooperative effort among Caribbean countries,

*Noting* the efforts of the Caribbean countries, within the framework of the Association of Caribbean States, to develop further support for their concept of the Caribbean Sea as an area of special importance, in the context of sustainable development and in conformity with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea,

*Welcoming* the decision by the Association of Caribbean States to establish the Working Group of Experts on the Caribbean Sea Initiative to further advance the implementation of resolution 55/203, inter alia, through the preparation of a technical report,

*Cognizant* of the importance of the Caribbean Sea to present and future generations and its importance to the heritage and the continuing economic well-being and sustenance of people living in the area, and the urgent need for the

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[11] See International Atomic Energy Agency, *Resolutions and Other Decisions of the General Conference, Forty-fourth Regular Session, 18–22 September 2000* (GC(44)/RES/DEC(2000)).

[12] Ibid., *Forty-sixth Regular Session, 16–20 September 2002* (GC(46)/RES/DEC(2002)).

countries of the region to take appropriate steps for its preservation and protection, with the support of the international community,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;[13]

2. *Recognizes* the importance of adopting an integrated management approach to the Caribbean Sea area in the context of sustainable development;

3. *Encourages* the further promotion of an integrated management approach to the Caribbean Sea area in the context of sustainable development, in accordance with the recommendations contained in resolution 54/225, as well as the provisions of Agenda 21,[8] the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States,[3] the outcome of the twenty-second special session of the General Assembly,[4] the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development,[5] the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation[6] and the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development, and in conformity with relevant international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea;[7]

4. *Also encourages* the continued efforts of the Caribbean countries to develop further an integrated management approach to the Caribbean Sea area in the context of sustainable development and, in this regard, to continue to develop regional cooperation in the management of their ocean affairs in the context of sustainable development, in order to address such issues as land-based pollution, pollution from ships, physical impacts on coral reefs and the diversity and dynamic interaction of, and competition among, socio-economic activities for the use of the coastal areas and the marine environment and their resources;

5. *Calls upon* States to continue to prioritize action on marine pollution from land-based sources as part of their national sustainable development strategies and programmes, in an integrated and inclusive manner, and also calls upon them to advance the implementation of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities,[14] and the Montreal Declaration on the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities;[15]

6. *Calls upon* the United Nations system and the international community to assist, as appropriate, Caribbean countries and their regional organizations in their efforts to ensure the protection of the Caribbean Sea from degradation as a result of pollution from ships, in particular through the illegal release of oil and other harmful substances, and from illegal dumping or accidental release of hazardous waste, including radioactive materials, nuclear waste and dangerous chemicals, in violation of relevant international rules and standards, as well as pollution from land-based activities;

7. *Calls upon* all relevant States to take the necessary steps to bring into force, and to support the implementation of, the Protocol Concerning Pollution from Land-based Sources and Activities[10] to the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region[9] in order to protect the marine environment of the Caribbean Sea from land-based pollution and degradation;

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[13] A/57/131.

[14] A/51/116, annex II.

[15] E/CN.17/2002/PC.2/15, annex, sect. I.

8. *Calls upon* the international community to support the efforts of the Working Group of Experts on the Caribbean Sea Initiative of the Association of Caribbean States to further implement resolution 55/203, and invites the Association to submit a report on its progress to the Secretary-General for consideration during the fifty-ninth session of the General Assembly;

9. *Calls upon* all States to become contracting parties to relevant international agreements to promote the protection of the marine environment of the Caribbean Sea from pollution and degradation from ships;

10. *Supports* the efforts of Caribbean countries to implement sustainable fisheries management programmes by strengthening the recently established Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism;

11. *Calls upon* States, taking into consideration the Convention on Biological Diversity,[16] to develop national, regional and international programmes for halting the loss of marine biodiversity in the Caribbean Sea, in particular fragile ecosystems, such as coral reefs;

12. *Invites* intergovernmental organizations within the United Nations system to continue their efforts to assist Caribbean countries in becoming parties to the relevant conventions and protocols and to implement them effectively;

13. *Calls upon* the international community, the United Nations system and the multilateral financial institutions, and invites the Global Environment Facility, within its mandate, to support actively the above-mentioned approach;

14. *Calls upon* Member States to improve as a matter of priority their emergency response capabilities and the containment of environmental damage, particularly in the Caribbean Sea, in the event of natural disasters or of an accident or incident relating to maritime navigation;

15. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to it at its fifty-ninth session, under the sub-item entitled "Further implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States" of the item entitled "Environment and sustainable development", on the implementation of the present resolution, taking into account the views expressed by relevant regional organizations.

*78th plenary meeting*
*20 December 2002*

[16] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1760, No. 30619.